

are required to make annual report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. A few words touching the character of the reports now submitted may not be out of place.

School authorities have not been as prompt and accurate in making their reports as the necessities of the case require.

The law requires the annual school census to be taken in June and return thereof to be made to this office on the first day of July. This duty is devolved upon the township school committee. But now, on the first day of November, *four months* after the day of return, thirty counties are delinquent—just one third of the whole number of counties have failed to comply with the law.

To illustrate the incompleteness of these reports, I need only say, that nearly one half of the reports of township committees neglect to give the number of pupils attending the schools of the township; many report a *part* instead of the whole number attending school.

As this is the first year that reports under the present system have been required, this dereliction may be excusable. It is hoped that another year will show a praise-worthy completeness. To present a satisfactory exhibit of the year's work, unless reports from school officers of every department are made as the law directs, is impracticable.

It is desirable, that the people in every part of the State should know what has been attempted, and how much accomplished.

It is indispensable, that a *complete* statement of the annual school work should be communicated to the General Assembly. The report of the Superintendent furnishes data for Legislative action.

Carefully drawn reports aid in the correction of faults, induce inquiry, vigilance and fidelity, and thus lead the work on to perfection.

I hope that your Excellency will commend these considerations to the candid and thoughtful attention of all school officers.